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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000525

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP,
CAIRO FOR STEVE BONDY,
LONDON FOR ETHAN GOLDRICH
STATE PLEASE PASS TO USTR - JASON BUNTIN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/13/2029

TAGS: [KBCT](#) [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: SECSTATE 69459

Classified By: Charge de Affaires Robert S. Ford for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Congressman Ryan called the Arab League's boycott of Israel a "Free Trade Agreement (FTA) showstopper" in his April 7 meetings with parliamentarians, the Minister of Finance and National Economy and the Minister of State of Foreign Affairs. Although Ryan praised Bahrain for being the leader of democratic reform in the region, he expressed his hope that Bahrain would likewise take a leadership role in countering the boycott of Israel.

2. (C) As a follow-up to Ryan's presentation, Charge provided Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Abdelghaffar with documentation that demonstrated an increase in boycott compliance requests from 15 in 2002 to 31 this year on April 12 (reftel). Charge also discussed reftel's tertiary boycott contract text examples with Minister Abdelghaffar. Bahrain repealed both secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott in 1994 and Abdelghaffar was demonstrably surprised that boycott compliance requests were still an issue. Charge urged Abdelghaffar to resolve this serious issue to ensure smooth passage of the FTA through Congress. Minister Abdelghaffar promised Charge that he would investigate this issue.

3. (C) We are following up separately with the Minister of Finance and National Economy, who has pledged separately to us to resolve the problem cited in the reftel.
FORD